

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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*Published by the Commission on Public Relations
of the National Christian Council of Japan*

CABLE CODE: JAPACONCIL, ADDRESS: CHRISTIAN CENTER, 2-1-CHOME GINZA, TOKYO, JAPAN

Subscription Rates: Japan ¥1,000; Foreign (Sea mail: \$3.00; Air mail: \$3.00, plus additional postage)

No. 44

August 15, 1954

AVACO HOLDS SUMMER AUDIO-VISUALS CONFERENCE

July 23-26 at scenic Kutsukake, four hours north of Tokyo, the Audio-visual Aids Commission of the NCC held its annual summer conference on audio-visuals with the accent this year on use in religious education. About two-thirds of the 220 who attended were church school or kindergarten teachers, who came literally from all over Japan, Hokkaido to Kyushu. There were three hundred applications, only two hundred of which could be accepted. As the conference opened an additional twenty persons came begging to be allowed to attend although there was no room for them.

The program ranged all the way from two lectures on "The Aesthetic Element in Worship" by Prof. Kitamori of Tokyo Theological Seminary to the construction of simple audio-visual aids.

The heart of the conference and the reason for its popularity are the workshops. The conferees were divided into seven groups according to their interests. The major part of the conference was spent in these groups where, under skilled supervision, they produced "ebanashi" (picture stories), practiced story-telling, made and used puppets, or learned recreation leadership and songs.

The leader of each workshop was a nationally known Christian, and several of them are famous in their fields in secular as well as church life.

This kind of workshop is rare in Japan where education is highly theoretical, usually by the lecture method. Even engineers, for instance, learn the operation and care of their machines mainly after they graduate and start to work. The AVACO workshops are one of the few places teachers can get this sort of training.

In addition to the ones mentioned above there were workshops in drama, kamishibai (paper plays), and the operation of A-V equipment. In the latter group a certificate is widely recognised and permits those who can qualify to borrow projectors and other expensive and complicated A-V equipment from government agencies, companies, etc., for church use.

On the evening of the 24th there were demonstration by the workshops for the entire group so that everyone could learn something about what the other workshops were doing.

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Two missionaries, Rev. A.R. Stone, United Church of Canada, and Rev. R.A. Merritt, Episcopalian, participated, lecturing on "Rural Evangelism and Audio-visuals" and "Film Evangelism", respectively.

During the three and a half days a high degree of Christian fellowship was developed. This was aided by the songs and recreation led by Mr. Takahashi of the Tokyo YMCA. Leaders made short humorous "table talks" at meals, introducing themselves. And the last day they played a game wherein they counted off and each seventh person had to introduce himself and tell a story. The Japanese love these humorous speeches as much as western conferees love their conference songs.

In evaluation of the conference, the conferees requested that more regional workshops be held in various parts of the country, and that next year the conference be lengthened so that an individual can participate in more than one workshop.

500 ATTEND FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES CONFERENCE AT NOJIRI

An appeal for a full time publicity director for the Christian movement in Japan will be sent to the NCCCUSA by the Fellowship of Christian Missionaries, it was decided at the annual meeting held from July 29-31 at Lake Nojiri. The conference, for which over 500 missionaries registered also recommended that the nature of the Japan Christian Yearbook and the Japan Christian Quarterly be slightly changed in the future. Under the new plan, the Yearbook would contain only a directory of missions and missionaries, and possibly a short introductory article. The reports and articles which have heretofore been included in the Yearbook would be regarded as Quarterly material. If the NCCCUSA is able to send a publicity director, this person would also act as editor of both the Yearbook and Quarterly.

The 1954-55 officers were chosen from the Kansai area and include: President: Rev. Ed Bollinger (American Baptist); Vice-President: Gordon Tang (Evangelical Lutheran Church); Secretary: Mrs. L.C.M. Smythe Treasurer: Rev. J. Lawrence Driskill (Interboard Committee). An offering of 51,000 yen was taken at the final meeting to be applied against the deficit of the Fellowship. The time and place of next years conference will be decided by the new executive committee.

Under the theme "Evangelism: God Working Through US" the conference heard panel discussions on Christian Education and Christian Social Work as Avenues of Evangelism, and lectures on Student Work, Audio Visual Aids (Radio and Newspaper) and Special Evangelistic Efforts as Avenues of Evangelism. After each topic was presented time was given for sharing of "Adventures in Evangelism". Under this heading, Dr. Archibald Campbell of Korea presented slides and pictures and summarized the situation of the valiant Christian church in that country. The Lacour Musical Evangelical Team presented a brief concert, and both Lacour and Dr. Harry Richardson, prominent Negro educator, addressed the conference on the methods and purposes of the Lacour Group.

The morning devotions, one of the highlights of the conference, were led by Dr. Hugh Moreton, Dr. Emil Brunner and the Rev. W.J. Danker respectively. The conference closed with a service of Holy Communion presided over by Dr. W.A. McIlwaine.

FAR EAST CHURCHES DISCUSS MUTUAL INTERCHANGE OF CHRISTIAN WORKERS

Representatives of the Asian Christian Churches gathered in HongKong from July 23-26 in one of the first regional committee conferences on ecumenical missions to be sponsored by the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA. The purpose of the conference was to discuss the possibility of exchanging fraternal workers among the churches of the Far East.

Rev. Kozo Kashiwai, vice-moderator of the United Church of Christ in Japan attended the conference and commented as follows: "The churches in Asia have been keeping in very close contact with the churches of the USA and Europe, but have not had much contact with each other. Since the Asian churches are actually under similar economic, political and cultural situations the conference felt that it would be very useful to exchange experience and help with each other. The Philippine representative, for example, was particularly interested in the status of rural mission activity in Japan, and also expressed the hope that Japan and the Philippines could exchange theological professors. The possibility of a Philippines, Japan, Korea rural mission conference was discussed at the conference."

The churches of the Philippines have sent missionaries to Thai, Indonesia and Okinawa while the Kyodan has sent Christian workers to Okinawa, and now is supporting seminary students who are studying in Japan. Means for implementing the ideas discussed at the conference will be worked out in the future.

CHRISTIAN STUDENTS CONFER AT GOTEMBA

The first steps toward the formation of a national students organization within the Kyodan were taken at the National Christian Students summer training conference held at the Gotemba Tozanso YMCA Camp from July 20-24.

At the conference, sponsored by the United Church of Christ in Japan, arrangement committees were elected to implement such an organization. The lack of such a national student group in the church has hampered student work in the past, and has made it impossible for the Kyodan young people to cooperate with the World Christian Students Fellowship.

100 Christian students, chosen from local Kyodan districts, attended the conference, whose theme was "Christ the Hope of the World". Professor Kazo Kitamori, of Tokyo Union Theological Seminary lectured on this theme from the theological viewpoint, and Professor Kikuo Yamaoka, of Chiba University approached the theme from the angle of the Social Sciences. The world peace problem, students evangelical activity in the churches and the problem of YMCA activity in the colleges were also discussed at the conference.

JAPAN CHRISTIAN KINDERGARTEN FEDERATION HOLDS ANNUAL MEETING

The Japan Christian Kindergarten Federation held its 9th Annual meeting and teachers training conference at Doshisha University in Kyoto from July 27-30. A new executive committee was elected and the 1954 budget of 77,500 yen was approved. 74 area representatives attended the meeting, and about 600 attended the training conference which followed.

VACATIONS

There will be only one issue of the Activity News during August due to summer vacations.

